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**United Nations
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**United Nations Environment Assembly of the
United Nations Environment Programme**
First session
Nairobi, 23–27 June 2014
Item 5 of the provisional agenda*
Policy issues

**Statements and recommendations by major groups and
stakeholders to the United Nations Environment Assembly at its
first session**

Note by the secretariat

I. Background

1. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) regional consultation meetings with major groups and stakeholders are held every year in preparation for the annual sessions of the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum and the United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP. The outcome of the regional consultation meetings usually takes the form of a statement or key messages and recommendations to the governing body of UNEP, forwarded to member States six weeks before the session of the governing body as an information document.
2. The regional consultation meetings held in 2013 served as a platform for engaging major groups and stakeholders from the regions in addressing the main areas and topics for discussion by the United Nations Environment Assembly at its first session, to be held in June 2014.
3. The outcome of the regional consultation meetings will feed into the fifteenth session of the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum and the first session of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

II. Topics for discussion

4. The regional consultation meetings addressed the following key issues:
 - (a) United Nations Environment Assembly;
 - (b) Sustainable development goals and the post-2015 development agenda, the role of UNEP in the post-2015 development agenda and integrating environmental sustainability into that agenda;
 - (c) Stakeholder engagement and access to information: new mechanisms for the engagement of major groups and stakeholders in UNEP, including the Environment Assembly, strengthening the participation of civil society organizations and stakeholders by adopting a

* UNEP/EA.1/1.

stakeholder engagement policy, and the application of the Guidelines for the Development of National Legislation on Access to Information, Public Participation and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Bali Guidelines);

(d) The 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns; and

(e) Regional priorities.

5. The dates and venues of the regional consultation meetings are set out in table 1.

Table 1
Dates and venues of the regional consultation meetings

Region	Meeting dates and venues
Africa	12–15 October 2013, Gaborone
Europe	4 and 5 November 2013, Istanbul, Turkey
Western Asia	26 and 27 November 2013, Amman
Asia and the Pacific	17 and 18 September 2013, Phnom Penh
Latin America and Caribbean	18 and 19 November 2013, Panama City
North America	3 and 4 December 2013, Washington, D.C.

6. A total of 273 participants attended the regional consultation meetings. Table 2 provides an overview of the distribution of participants by major group and by region. Non-governmental organizations were the most represented of the major groups and stakeholders with 53.8 per cent of the total number of participants followed by the ‘Other’ category with 13.2 per cent of the total number.

Table 2
Representation of major groups and stakeholders at the regional consultation meetings

	Type of major group	Africa	Europe	Western Asia	Asia and the Pacific	Latin America and the Caribbean	North America	Total	Percentage
1	Business and industry	0	0	1	0	2	6	9	3.29
2	Children and youth	5	2	3	6	2	3	21	7.69
3	Indigenous people	2	1	0	5	1	1	10	3.66
4	Local authorities	0	0	0	1	2	0	3	1.09
5	Non-governmental organizations	33	13	18	51	3	29	147	53.8
6	Science and technology (including research and academia)	2	3	3	4	3	8	23	8.42
7	Women	2	11	1	3	2	0	19	6.95
8	Farmers	0	1	0	1	1	0	3	1.09
9	Workers and trade unions	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	1.09
10	Other ^a	24	2	1	5	0	4	36	13.18
	Total	68	33	28	76	17	51	273	100

^a Includes stakeholders such as faith-based groups, the media, foundations, organizations whose mandates cut across several sectors, as well as intergovernmental bodies such as the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

III. Statements and recommendations

7. The annex to the present note contains statements and recommendations from major groups and stakeholders prepared during the regional consultation meetings. The key messages contained in the statements and recommendations reflect areas in which general consensus was reached at the meetings; however, the various groups represented did not necessarily endorse every conclusion. The annex has not been formally edited.

Annex

Outcomes of the regional consultation meetings with major groups and stakeholders*

AFRICA ANNUAL REGIONAL CONSULTATIONS MEETING WITH MAJOR GROUPS AND STAKEHOLDERS IN PREPARATION FOR THE 15TH UNEP GLOBAL MAJOR GROUPS AND STAKEHOLDERS FORUM (GMGSF-15) AND FIRST SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT ASSEMBLY OF UNEP (UNEA-1), 12-15 OCTOBER 2013 (GABORONE, BOTSWANA)

CIVIL SOCIETY COMMUNIQUE TO THE FIFTH AMCEN SPECIAL SESSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE UNEA

We, the representatives of African Civil Society Organizations and Networks under the auspices of Pan African Climate Justice Alliance met in Gaborone, Botswana, on October 12-14, 2013 for the Pre-AMCEN African Civil Society Consultative Workshop, ahead of the 5th Special Session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN). The Workshop also served as the UNEP Regional Consultative Meeting with Major Groups and Stakeholders in the Africa Region (MGSF) in preparation for the Global Ministerial Environment Forum and 15th Session of the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum scheduled to take place in 2014.

Aware that the IPCC-WG I released in Stockholm, Sweden in September 2013 raised red flag on the rapidly heating earth and the certainty of man's contribution to the growing concentration of greenhouse gas into the atmosphere;

Further aware that the adverse effects of climate change manifested by prolonged droughts, shifting seasons, rising sea water levels, tropical cyclones, land slides, newly emerging environmental refugees, and diseases have compromised Africa's right to development and attainment of national sustainable development and poverty reduction aspirations;

Concerned that the last two decades have been characterised by unfulfilled promises and commitments by developed countries to Africa in particular hence breeding an atmosphere of ever-diminishing trust and confidence in international negotiations processes;

Further concerned of the cruel irony that a people who have lived for so long in harmony with Mother Earth, imprinting the lightest of footprints, now suffer a crisis they contributed the least towards it cause;

Inspired by the need to strengthen our voices as civil society and community groups to contribute to our Governments' Positions on various global standpoints.

Acknowledging the efforts by Africa to speak with one voice during the UNFCCC-COP 19 in Warsaw, Poland

Acknowledging the fact that non-state actors contribution to the UNFCCC process and its outcome is essential for informed policy formulation and monitoring of its implementation at all levels.

Desirous that the One Voice should be that of and be informed by realities of the local communities in the affirmation of the authority of the Civil Society and communities as the expression of the sovereign will of the people;

Appreciating, as a positive step, the COP18 outcome on decision made on promoting gender balance and improving the participation of women in UNFCCC negotiations and related processes;

Recognizing the progress made so far by the Africa Group, African Ministerial Conference on the Environment and African Union through CAHOSOC to harmonise African climate change response efforts;

* Issued without formal editing.

Declares as follows;

1. Keep Africa safe:

We support the acceptance of "loss and damage" as a key area of discussion for the new climate agreement. Africa should also continue calling for the blanket of greenhouse gas in the atmosphere to be returned to well below 300ppm CO₂eq and warming to be limited to well below 1 degree Celsius above pre-industrial levels, with the objective of returning to pre-industrial levels in the longer term.

Based on the accounts we have heard from the local communities, women, youth, indigenous groups of the intolerable conditions caused by climate change including a case of a pastoralist who took his life after losing all his cattle to a prolonged drought, and based on the report of IPCC Working Group I 5th assessment, even warming of this level globally risks warming of more than 1.5 degrees Celsius in Africa, dangerous interference with our climate, and loss and damage requiring compensation. A goal of "less than 2 degrees Celsius" is no longer ambitious as accepting it would be condemning Africa to incineration and to no modern development.

2. Ensure poverty eradication and food Security:

Climate change poses grave risk to Africa's food security, and to the lives and livelihoods of smallholder farmers and rural poor communities. African leaders should thus ensure the decisions they support at global level leads to atmospheric concentrations stabilized in a time frame that safeguards food production and ecological systems to adapt naturally, and safeguards jobs and economic development. Agriculture remains one of the crucial sectors affected by climate change and which supports food and livelihoods security of millions around the world especially in developing countries. African governments should therefore put pressure to Parties and SBSTA to conclude the agriculture negotiations under UNFCCC with focus on adaptation and expand the remit to cover sustainable livestock production systems as part of solution to climate change.

3. Share the atmosphere fairly:

African people have the inalienable right to achieve sustainable development by making use of a fair share of the Earth's global commons and resources. The carbon budget required to return to well below 300ppm CO₂eq should be shared fairly with Africa taking into account the accumulative historical use of these resources by developed countries and the finance and technology transfers made available to developing countries.

4. Industrialized countries to cut excessive consumption and pollution:

Comprehensive action to address climate change should constitute drastic emissions cut by industrialized countries at domestic level. The withdrawal of Canada, New Zealand, Russia and Japan from the KP2 and the continued refusal of United States to ratify the Kyoto Protocol are not good signals to the rest of the global community. These countries should accept their historical responsibilities, reconsider their position and recommit without further delay and conditions.

Though science points to the current emissions of some emerging economies exceeding the industrialized countries, we should recognize that current atmospheric concentrations are principally the result of historical emissions of greenhouse gases, the largest share of which originated in developed country Parties. There is an urgent need for emission cuts by having specific target for all Annex I parties to reduce emissions by at least 45% below 1990 levels by 2020 and 100% by 2050 below 1990 levels.

5. Protect and compensate affected communities:

African leaders should not compromise on their demand that ensures that industrialised countries compensate affected communities and countries for the full costs of avoiding harms, actual harms and damage, and lost opportunities for development resulting from climate change. Any effort to establish adaptation as an obligation and not a right, or to use adaptation as a means to divide or differentiate between developing countries should be resisted. An international mechanism for compensation on the loss and damage caused by extreme weather events related to climate change should thus be established. Though the Green Climate Fund has been established, many observers fear that it may follow the direction of other Climate Funds before it, which remain empty shells after they were shunned by industrialized countries, that favor undemocratic multilateral institutions the can control.

6. Polluter not poor pays:

Developed countries have prospered through "cheap carbon" growth while externalizing their costs to the atmosphere and to developing countries through what has been christened "offsetting". The costs are now born by Africa, as we mitigate and adapt to a crisis we played little role in causing. To avert a

climate catastrophe and enable mitigation, adaptation and technology transfer to developing countries, developed countries must make available financing of more than 1.5% of their GDP. Efforts to shift the burden of financing away from developed countries and towards developing countries or the markets that have not worked should be avoided. Creation of "unsupported" or "market" NAMAs (actions) are inconsistent with the Convention and thus experiments that are not worth investing.

7. Transfer the tools to adapt and develop.

A "Marshall Plan for Africa and for the Earth" is an emergency that should awaken all stakeholders. Curbing global emissions within a decade requires technology transfers on a scale never before considered. African leaders should compel developed countries to remove intellectual property rights, pay full incremental costs of technology transfer to protect developing countries and contribute for peaking and declining of global emissions. Efforts to sell rather than transfer appropriate technologies, or to strengthen rather than relax intellectual property rights should not be allowed. Developed and developing countries should support the adoption and development of indigenous and locally innovated technology as well as ensuring efficiency in technology transfer and deployment.

8. Fair not false solutions:

Industrialized countries must not shift burdens to address climate change to developing countries, or seek to "divide and rule" the countries of the South, or to penalize developing countries through trade or other measures. Creation of global carbon markets or sectoral trading mechanisms, by which the developed countries will take more of Africa's rightful share of atmospheric space should be discouraged.

9. Systems change not climate change:

We should acknowledge the structural causes of the present crisis, and that the climate crisis will not be solved with the same level of thinking that created it. A new system that restores harmony with nature and among human beings should be the only sustainable way to comprehensively deal with climate change impacts. To balance with nature, there must first be equity among human beings. There is need for fundamental change to the current system of social and economic organization. A new order building on the wisdom of our civilizations to live well and to live in harmony with Mother Earth should be the common clarion call for our leaders.

10. Keep to the commitments made:

More pressure from African leaders to ensure developed countries honour and deliver on their commitment of providing "\$5100 Billion by the year 2020 should be exerted. Industrialised countries must scale up their Commitments to fulfil their obligation to provide adequate, new and additional funds as this amount is far from all estimates of climate finance needed by developing countries. In COP19, Africa should ask Parties to the Convention to establish a clear and transparent mechanism for monitoring, verification, and evaluation of delivery of climate funds.

Our leaders should call for immediate establishment of an independent process to conduct transparent and consultative verification on developed countries' claim that they have successfully delivered all FSF of over USD 30 billion to developing countries during 2010-2012 in accordance with controversial Copenhagen Accord, which metamorphosed into Cancun Agreement.

In light of the past failures and lessons learned from past and existing climate funds, the Green Climate Fund must ensure transparency, openness, local communities' easy access, country ownership and respond primarily to the needs of vulnerable communities. The Fund must respect such principles as sovereignty, self-determination the fulfilment of State obligations; "Do no harm", Financial integrity and anti-corruption, Public consultations, "Equity, non-discrimination and inclusion", "Compliance with International Law and Upward Harmonization with the Highest National and International Standards".

GCF must recognize that human and environmental rights obligations have primacy over financial obligations

11. Gender equity and enhanced stakeholder participation:

Though COP18 made some progress in recognizing gender in negotiating text, still much need to be done. Participation of women, youth, indigenous people and marginalized groups in UNFCCC negotiations and representation of Parties in bodies should be balanced between North and South, taking into account the respective differences.

12. Defend democracy:

The Since the UNFCCC constitutes the fundamental legal framework on climate change African leaders should demand for establishment of effective and accountable institutions under the Conference of Parties. Any response to the climate crisis that is of the people, by the people and for the people should be the guiding principle of future efforts.

Governments across the world should end years of delay and meet their moral, historical and legal obligations. Movements, people's organizations, civil society groups and citizens from all walks of life are gradually coming together in a global campaign on climate and environmental justice. African civil society's desire is to stand in solidarity with the leaders of any nation who seek a solution to climate change that is founded on justice, builds on the best available science, and ensures the well-being of Africans and other peoples and countries.

13. Effective participation in Post 2015 and SDG process

Africa should promote a Single framework with poverty alleviation at the centre and the three dimensions of sustainable development (environment, economic and social). A comprehensive mechanism to deal with the environment should be developed at the level of African Union Commission and the relevant institutional framework for sustainable development should be strengthened and the collaboration and sharing of information between the African missions in New York and the Capitals should be enhanced.

14. United Nations Environmental Assembly (UNEA):

As the strengthened and upgraded UNEP is poised to play an effective role as a follow-up to Rio+20 in integrating three dimensions of sustainable development, the Committee of Permanent Representatives allow full participation of Major Groups. Major Groups already accredited under UN ECOSOC should be recognized by UNEA, while elected MGSF Regional Representatives should be accorded speaking rights at the Committee of Permanent Representatives and UNEA. Broader partnerships between UNEP and other organizations in efforts to fulfil its mandate should always be promoted, with UNEP not limiting itself policy formulation but also implementation

EUROPE ANNUAL REGIONAL CONSULTATION MEETING (RCM) WITH MAJOR GROUPS AND STAKEHOLDERS IN PREPARATION FOR THE 15TH UNEP GLOBAL MAJOR GROUPS AND STAKEHOLDERS FORUM (GMGSF-15) AND FIRST SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT ASSEMBLY OF UNEP (UNEA-1), 4-5 NOVEMBER, 2013 (ISTANBUL, TURKEY)

KEY MESSAGES

The 2013 UNEP European Regional Consultation (RCM) with Major Groups and Stakeholders (MGS) was held from 4 -5 November 2013 in Istanbul, Turkey, and prior to the UN Regional Consultation on the Post-2015 Development Agenda for Europe and Central Asia held from 6-8 November 2013.

The RCM attracted UNEP accredited Major groups and stakeholders in Europe, ROE MGS partners involved in the Environment for Europe (EfE) process, the Caspian Convention, the Carpathian Convention, the Poverty and Environment Initiative, Environment and Security Initiative, the Black Sea, the Pan-European Biodiversity Platform and the European Environment and Health processes (EEHP).

The themes for the consultation included the new mechanisms for the engagement of MGS in UNEP (including UNEA), the 10 Years Framework of Programmes on SCP (10YFP), UNEP's role in the Post-2015 development agenda and SDGs and the implementation of UNEP PoW in the European region.

The following messages were put forward by the participants:

On the new mechanisms for the engagement of MGS in UNEP:

Welcomed the proposed new mechanisms for stakeholder engagement at UNEP in line with the spirit of paragraph 88h of the Rio Outcome Document;

Stakeholder contributions to UNEP should be based on local, national and regional experiences, practices and knowledge;

We support the principle of participation, meaningful engagement and access to intergovernmental processes for the afore mentioned stakeholders, as expressed in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), resolution 67/290 of July 9, 2013 establishing the High Level Political Forum, the HLPF, and further expressed in the Human Rights Covenants, the Aarhus Convention and in similar documents of equal formal standing;

We further support the construct of the major groups by the UN at UNCED in 1992 through Agenda 21 and as recognised and further resolved by the Rio 2012 Summit. Also, criteria for stakeholder engagement must be developed, using the criteria enumerated in the 1996 ECOSOC resolution 1996/31 on Consultative Relationship between the United Nations and Non-Governmental Organizations;

Within the current 'nine major groups' configuration, environmental NGOs function today as a sub-set of the NGO major group despite their specific environmental profile and expertise. In the future work of UNEP, UNEP should recognize environmental NGOs as an additional and distinct major group with a guaranteed seat and voice in UNEP processes;

In view of the 'new UNEP' as expressed in the Rio Outcome Document, the mandate for regional representatives, their modalities, functions and roles need to be further adjusted and elaborated, and relevant modalities should be developed with the assistance of UNEP to function as conveners of regional environmental networks and their activities with the representatives of major groups.

In line with practise developed at the first UN Summit in 1992, the 2002 Johannesburg Summit and some of the best practise employed by other UN relevant conferences, accreditation should be given to all interested stakeholder organisation that can prove they comply with basic standards and criteria for organisations developed and utilised by UNEP;

Major groups and other stakeholders should always be given access to the UNEA of UNEP and its subsidiary bodies including the Open Ended CPR (Committee of Permanent Representatives) as well as other CPR meetings as appropriate and when needed; and

The proposed new mechanisms for stakeholder engagement will not succeed without adequate funding. Therefore, adequate funding should be made available to ensure quality input from major groups and other stakeholders, in terms of process as well as thematic work, and to promote continued and credible engagement in UNEP-related issues.

On the 10 Years Framework of Programmes on SCP (10YFP):

Fully support UNEP's continued role and work to accelerate the shift towards sustainable consumption and production (SCP) patterns in both developed and developing countries;

The 10YFP will only succeed if the international context is appropriate for its implementation. Therefore, we think that the SCP agenda cannot be isolated from other global trade and market policies. As indicated in paragraph 225 of the Rio+20 outcome document harmful and inefficient consumption and production policies and incentives have adverse impacts on the environment and communities at large, and undermine efforts to make sustainable choices and achieve sustainable development;

Therefore, we strongly recommend an accelerated phase out of the unsustainable and harmful subsidies and investments in the energy, agriculture and other sectors;

We strongly recommend that the 10YFP focus on changing and transforming the unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, and going beyond promoting green consumption and production.

We would underline the importance of clearly identifying and directly addressing some of the fundamental obstacles to achieving SCP. These include a debt-based economy, which leads to GDP growth obsession and overconsumption of resources; financial, monetary and economic systems that are not appropriate to implementing SCP; and the existing "consumer blindness", leading to unrealistic consumption growth, without awareness and realization of its environmental and social consequences;

We therefore stress that technical and market based solutions will never be enough to tackle the environmental and social challenges posed by unsustainable patterns of consumption and production. We need to focus on fundamental changes in lifestyles, as well as transformation of corporate value from maximizing profit to meeting social and environmental standards and responsibilities as a fundamental and legal objective;

We also caution that the SCP agenda is not only about the environment, but also about social improvements such as labour conditions and health and gender equality;

We recognize the highly energy and resource-intensive production patterns in many sectors contributing to the continued deterioration of the environment through emissions of waste, toxic materials, pollutants, and depletion of scarce resources. 10YFP should be effectively used to promote policies, incentives and actions to create sustainable production and energy patterns;

We are in favour of national and local strategies on SCP, including active stakeholder involvement, to guarantee implementation in the field. An international framework is nevertheless important, to harmonise the policies and regulations and create a level playing field. Capacity building work is also vital, especially for countries that are not very familiar with SCP policies;

We would like to see education and raising awareness on SCP mainstreamed in all programmes (including in school curricula); and

The discussion on sustainable consumption and production should be at the center of the post-2015 development agenda discussion and should also be considered as a stand-alone SDG.

On UNEP's role in the Post-2015 development agenda and SDGs:

Welcome and support the integrated approach promoted by UNEP and the discussion paper on Embedding the Environment in SDGs, and the UN Europe and Central Asia advocacy paper on "Building more inclusive, sustainable and prosperous societies in Europe and Central Asia";

Support the need to focus on the critical global environmental challenges, especially over the next decade, as choices made within this time frame will be crucial for preventing catastrophic climate change, saving our oceans, and protecting remaining natural forests – all of which are prerequisites for human development and well-being;

The Post-2015 development agenda should also focus on implementing obligations and commitments already made under the different the Multilateral Environmental Agreements;

Ensure the new goals must not only speak to and inspire governments and aid agencies, but the private sector, investors, and the public at large; and

Urge UNEP to support and assist the participation of MGS in the post-2015/SDGs related processes to promote the UNEP approach of embedding the environment in all the discussions leading to the SDGs and its implementation.

On the implementation of UNEP PoW in the European region:

Appreciate UNEP's effort for opening opportunities to include the views, expertise and knowledge of MGS in the implementation of the PoW;

Acknowledge UNEP's continued role and contribution in the environment and health process and in particular its continued support for the active participation and engagement of MGS in the process;

Appreciate the national stakeholder consultation for Green Economy and Sustainable Consumption and Production held in different countries with a broad participation of national authorities, international organizations and NGOs; and

Further encouraged UNEP to increase and create additional opportunities to engage NGOs, the private sector, and scientists/academia in the development and implementation of regional programmes.

**WEST ASIA ANNUAL REGIONAL CONSULTATION MEETING
WITH MAJOR GROUPS AND STAKEHOLDERS IN
PREPARATION FOR THE 15TH UNEP GLOBAL MAJOR
GROUPS AND STAKEHOLDERS FORUM (GMGSF-15) AND
FIRST SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT
ASSEMBLY OF UNEP (UNEA-1), 26 – 27 NOVEMBER 2013
(AMMAN, JORDAN)**

Statement/recommendations

We, the participants at the Major Groups and Stakeholders Regional Consultation Meeting for West Asia, in preparation for the first United Nations Environment Programme General Assembly, and the fifteenth Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum (GMGSF-15), held back-to-back with the Arab Water Dialogue, and at which 28 representatives of Major Groups were present on 26-27 of November 2013 in Amman, Jordan, agreed on the following:

Sustainable Development Goals- SDGs

Recognizing the importance of the efforts made by various bodies working on developing the Sustainable Development Goals and Post-2015 Development Agenda, we:

1. *Stress* the importance of balancing the three dimensions of sustainable development (environmental, social and economic) in order to integrate the principles of justice, participation, transparency, accountability, democracy, respect for human rights, gender equality and empowerment of women and disadvantaged groups, in addition to Agenda 21 and Rio principles, namely "common but differentiated responsibilities" (CBDR), and the sovereignty of nations and people over their natural resources.
2. *Stipulate* the need for the global Sustainable Development Goals to take into consideration the specificities, priorities, and capacities of nations, in addition to regional and national policies, with a particular focus on freedom, peace, security, prevention of war and conflict, poverty eradication, in addition to food, energy, water, transportation, along with changing patterns of consumption and production, reduction in land degradation, drought and desertification, biodiversity conservation, disaster reduction and emergency preparation, being key priorities for achieving sustainable development.
3. *Request* that Sustainable Development Goals are clear, concise, scientific and limited in number, implementable with clear targets and measurable indicators that allow for monitoring and evaluating the progress toward sustainability
4. *Emphasize* the need to ensure the basic components or enablers to achieve these goals, particularly effective governance and implementation mechanisms including both the traditional methods such as funding and the development of effective mechanisms to provide opportunities for knowledge, transfer and indigenization of environment-friendly technology, along with capacity building, building partnerships and support for policy development.
5. *Demand* the strengthening of institutional framework for sustainable development at national and regional levels in a way that is in-line with the principles of Rio+20, through establishing effective and transparent bodies or councils, that are connected and accountable to the highest decision making authorities, empowered and mandated to implement and follow up on the Sustainable Development Goals and plans, specifically through:
 - 5.1 The establishment of a Council for Sustainable Development at the regional level that is directly linked to the Economic and Social Council of the League of Arab States, with mechanisms to ensure the engagement of civil society, major groups and stakeholders at all levels.
 - 5.2 The establishment of a Council for Sustainable Development at national level that is directly linked to the executive authority with mechanisms to ensure the engagement of civil society, major groups and stakeholders at all levels.

The right to information access

6. We urge States to activate Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration to make it a fundamental principle of engagement and partnership among civil society, major groups and stakeholders, through:

6.1 The adoption of the Bali Guidelines prepared by UNEP at the regional and national levels and the development of legislation, policies and appropriate mechanisms to ensure the right of access to information concerning the environment and sustainable development.

6.2 The introduction of environmental law principles and the integration of sustainable development concepts within the education curriculum (schools and universities) and extra-curricular awareness programmes.

6.3 The development and establishment of a sustainable development information and data network to support the decision-making and planning processes and initiatives at the government and civil society levels.

6.4 Ensuring the continuous implementation of environmental assessments along with the implementation of environmental impact assessments for all projects and programmes, to ensure impacts and risks are identified, addressed and managed.

6.5 The need to integrate the environmental dimension in national policies, strategies and programmes to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

Sustainable production and consumption

7. We emphasize the need to take advantage of the 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production to contribute towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals

8. We urge the governments of the region to implement the adopted Arab strategy and execute the policies that have been adopted through the 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production.

9. We urge civil society to play a more active role in advocacy and raising awareness to rationalize consumption and production patterns.

Participation of civil society organizations and stakeholders

10. We affirm the need to update the institutional framework for civil society, major groups and stakeholders engagement in UNEP policy and programs and in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, and to develop the appropriate guidelines and policies to ensure their effective participation and engagement both at the regional and international levels. We affirm the need to:

10.1 Expand the major groups and stakeholder notion to include representation from other civil society organizations as well as other sectors such as the education sector, the media sector, people with disabilities etc.

10.2 Loosen the accreditation criteria of UNEP and ease the accreditation mechanisms to allow more effective and legitimate representation.

10.3 Ensure the independence of these Major Groups and stakeholders through self-organizing caucuses.

10.4 Adopt the principles related to participation, transparency, accountability, democracy, and good governance within the newly proposed institutional framework (currently under preparation).

10.5 Clarify the role and function of both the newly proposed institutional framework (currently called the Major Groups Facilitating Committee- MGFC) and the regional representation.

10.6 Ensure equal representation between the major groups and regional representation.

In regards to all that is related to the West Asia Region

We request the following:

11. Expanding and ensuring the representation of all civil society organizations and stakeholders (Major Groups) by raising awareness and mobilizing all groups through direct and official communication from UNEP's Regional Office for West Asia
12. Replicating the proposed institutional framework at the UNEP headquarters in the region, through the establishment of MGS regional committees at the regional level, composed of the various major groups and stakeholders, self-organized and managed on a rotational basis, and ensuring effective follow-up and coordination among them regionally and globally through the regional representation.
13. Strengthening the role of civil society and stakeholders in influencing national, regional and international policies related to the environment through the development of coordination and follow-up mechanisms with all major groups in West Asia, capacity building and establishing an information resource network for knowledge and experience sharing in the region.
14. Strengthening the role of the Regional Office for West Asia by enabling it to function more effectively by providing all the necessary financial resources to do so.

Regional priorities of West Asia

Given the political situation, state of war, occupation, conflict and insecurity conditions along with the over-exploitation of natural resources that some countries in West Asia are experiencing, which reflect negatively on the three dimensions of sustainable development, as well as on the local communities and the environment resources, as well as the demographic challenge and unemployment, we request the following:

15. Strengthening the efforts to achieve peace and security in the region and respond to the challenges of countries who suffer from political tensions, occupation, conflicts and insecurity
16. Encouraging a balanced growth in development activities to ensure environmental sustainability and conservation, benefiting from the knowledge sharing and transfer of successful experiences in the region.
17. Devising a comprehensive vision of sustainable development among the Arab countries (including countries in the West Asia region) translated through a unified strategy, which shall be aligned with national plans and initiatives for sustainable development.
18. Sustainable use and management of natural resources at both national and regional levels.
19. Application and implementation of international laws and agreements with respect to infringements of natural resources between countries.
20. Strengthening of regional cooperation in the areas of development whilst encouraging technology transfer in the region through planning and determining the needs to ensure appropriate transfer and nationalization of technology with an emphasis on capacity building and training to ensure the promotion of sustainable development.
21. Encouraging investment in research and development (R&D).
22. Promoting the principles of good governance and anti-corruption in its various forms locally, nationally, regionally and internationally, in addition to ensuring the participation of civil society and stakeholders whilst ensuring transparency and accountability to strengthen their role hence enabling them to perform their role and function as fully capable partners in the development of national plans and policies.

**ASIA AND THE PACIFIC ANNUAL REGIONAL
CONSULTATION MEETING WITH MAJOR GROUPS AND
STAKEHOLDERS IN PREPARATION FOR THE 15TH UNEP
GLOBAL MAJOR GROUPS AND STAKEHOLDERS FORUM
(GMGSF-15) AND FIRST SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
ENVIRONMENT ASSEMBLY OF UNEP (UNEA-1),
17 – 18 SEPTEMBER 2013 (PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA)**

RECOMMENDATIONS

84 participants from 23 countries in Asia and the Pacific attended the Asia-Pacific Major Groups and Stakeholders Regional Consultation Meeting organized by UNEP, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Satagoeri Project and Ecomom Korea and hosted by the Cooperation Committee for Cambodia. The meeting was held at the Imperial Garden & Villa Hotel, from 17-18 September 2013. The participants endorsed the following recommendations as necessary steps towards achieving environmental sustainability.

The environment is the foundation of all human activity and is the cornerstone for poverty alleviation. The key environmental challenges facing the Asia-Pacific region are access and control over natural resources, and the role of environmental sustainability as key elements to realize universal social protection, decent work and living wages and to achieve peace and security. Achieving sustainable consumption and production is also a critical issue of our time. The significant influence of corporations over countries in Asia-Pacific in shaping economic policies is preventing the realization of environmental and social objectives. We need to challenge the development paradigm that focuses only on economic growth while undermining human development and environmental sustainability.

The new development must be based on the principle of non-regression, embrace a holistic, rights based approach, and ensure that the human rights principles of equality, equity, justice – including gender equality and gender justice – non-discrimination, inclusive participation and decision making underpin its policies and practices and respect international human rights instruments such as United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Nationalities (UNDRIP), ILO C N. 169 including the right to development.

Environment in the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

The approach to the post-2015 development agenda and SDGs must create a constructive path to addressing environmental justice. We recommend that:

- The SDGs adopt a rights-based approach and ecosystem based approach to realize a transformative development agenda ;
- The new SDGs should include substantive targets and indicators to:
 - Realize clean air and equitable access to clean water, including safe drinking water;
 - Support sustainable cities and settlements;
 - Support non-toxic regions;
 - Ensure progress towards biodiversity conservation, access to and equitable sharing of benefits arising from sustainable use;
 - Mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change with the holistic approach;
 - Move towards energy efficiency and truly renewable energy;
 - Protect, rehabilitate, conserve and develop natural resources (air, water bodies, oceans, land and forest management).
- There is a comprehensive global mechanism for regulating transnational corporations' activities in undermining sustainable development and national sovereignty and holding them accountable;

- Means of implementation (finance, technology and capacity-building) must be addressed in every goal and should be translated to the grassroots level while recognizing that governance is a necessary enabler for implementation;
- Develop better qualitative and quantitative time-bound indicators for measuring social environment impacts and including distributional aspects;
- Recognize transboundary environmental and social impacts of large-scale infrastructure projects, monoculture plantations, technological interventions, etc. and the need to adapt preventative and/ or mitigation measures.

Role of Major Groups and Stakeholder Mechanisms: Civil society has an important role to play in setting development policy which is rooted in their close connection to affected communities. Asia-Pacific civil society input can be facilitated by improving regional engagement in the global processes by:

- Increased support from UNEP to enable more effective civil society engagement in processes;
- Creating a regional Major Group Facilitation Mechanism which would be guided by 11 principles on Stakeholders participation in UNEP that will revisit the current Regional Major Group structure with a Committee of the 9 Major Group Representatives from the region, with the role of establishing thematic working groups based on the agenda of the UN Environment Assembly ;
- Ensure there is greater legitimacy and mandate of the Major Groups by encouraging broader participation of local and national groups especially from marginalized communities and by engaging in consultation with constituencies and building their capacity to engage;
- Bring the Asia-Pacific regional positions beyond UNEP meetings to all relevant regional and global meetings to enhance coherence and congruence of messages ;
- Ensure regular and substantive feedback and follow ups to members of the Major Group for greater transparency, accountability and legitimacy;
- Establish opportunities to interface with Government Representatives at the regional level. This is important for civil society in the region to put forward their messages to Government Representatives and to create opportunities for effective dialogue;
- Use technology to webcast all meetings and take advantage of social media such as twitter and email to collect questions and feedback during these meetings. Lessons could be learnt from UNFCCC working group meetings which are effectively using such technologies;
- Ensure there are stronger processes for local, national and sub-regional consultation to strengthen the regional process and ensure greater legitimacy.

Green economy and sustainable consumption and production: We are facing serious barriers to realizing sustainable management of natural resources and waste management. Barriers include ineffective government policies to align to sustainable development priorities and lack of public awareness and barriers to making producers abide to their responsibilities to green production. The significant influence of corporations over countries in shaping economic policies is preventing the realization of environmental and social objectives. At the same time, developed countries are affecting developing countries trade and cooperation agreements which do not address local people's needs. We can overcome these barriers by:

- Recognizing ecological limits in the greening of consumption and production and addressing it through:
 - Ensuring greater resource efficiency through reducing material input in the production pipeline;
 - Incentivizing industries to apply green solutions;
 - Shifting to sustainable energy systems and increasing renewable energy production;
 - Reviving and promoting traditional values and knowledge.
- Greening budgets through:
 - Auditing of budgets whether they contribute to greening or not;
 - Incentivizing industry and public efforts to implement green solutions;

- Introducing policy meters for green budgets should also include wasteland development and increasing renewable energy use, and waste management policies.
- Community mobilizations towards green solutions and shaping economic development policies through:
 - Education, literacy, and campaigning for free access to correct information;
 - Strengthening work on community-based solutions to sustainable livelihoods, ecotourism, energy sources etc.;
 - Community-level ecological waste management such as teaching communities how to manage waste and at the same time advocate for government policies on ecological waste management.
- Support Common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR) and development justice by:
 - Giving Communities a say in determining their own development paths and priorities;
 - Supporting the increased consumption of poor people in the direction of addressing their needs for food, health and housing;
 - Creating better understanding of economic activities to realize social equity and greater regulation of the social economy and not relying on market-based solutions in reorienting the economy and changing the behavior and lifestyles of the public;
 - Lobbying governments and multilateral bodies so that economic development policies made at the national and international levels are oriented towards development justice.

Chemicals and Waste are having a damaging effect on the livelihoods of farming and rural communities affected by industrial agriculture and mining industry. Poor disposal of hazardous chemicals and GMOs are also affecting food security, human health and ecosystems. We call for the following measures:

At the National level:

- Ban riverine and ocean disposal of mine tailings ;
- Encourage governments to sign on to relevant international conventions e.g. Rotterdam Convention, Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), the Minamata Convention on Mercury, Universal Declaration of Human Rights; the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;
- Establish a Commission of Enquiry into contamination by mining companies, of which government is a shareholder;
- Shift to organic agriculture and/or reduction of chemicals in farming and local practices;
- Promote community-based certification schemes for organic products;
- Establish monitoring and evaluation of impacts on human health and soil, air and water quality;
- Establish participatory methodology for rural women to change to more sustainable farming systems;
- Introduce community-level waste management and recycling of green waste;
- Encourage governments to pass and implement chemical-specific legislation;
- Reinforce and implement capacity-building for users and traders in chemicals;
- Embed environmental services into social and economic systems, including micro-finance;
- Increase accountability of polluters through mechanisms that bind polluters to respect human rights;
- Respect and promote the use of traditional knowledge skills and practices for sustainable livelihoods.

At the International level:

- Invite the Special Rapporteur from UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous People's to carry out a report on compliance;
- Establish sub-regional and/or regional facilities for environmentally sound disposal of hazardous waste and products containing toxic substances, including e-waste and impose a ban on the export of toxic and hazardous waste from developed countries to under-developed countries which are being used as dumping grounds for such wastes;
- Establish sub-regional and/or regional facilities for a global program of monitoring human health for toxics and endocrine-disrupting chemicals;
- Establish sub-regional and/or regional mechanism to assess the potential environmental, social and economic impacts of new technologies and development interventions, with active participation of civil society;
- More collaboration between FAO and UNEP on funding the shift to organic farming.

OF THE LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN REGIONAL CONSULTATION MEETING WITH MAJOR GROUPS AND STAKEHOLDERS IN PREPARATION FOR THE 15TH SESSION OF THE GLOBAL MAJOR GROUPS AND STAKEHOLDERS FORUM (GMGSF-15) AND THE FIRST SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT ASSEMBLY (UNEA-1) OF UNEP), 18 AND 19 NOVEMBER 2013 (PANAMA CITY, PANAMA)

RECOMMENDATIONS

We, the representatives of the Major Groups and Stakeholders in Latin America and the Caribbean, at the UNEP Regional Consultation Meeting held on 18 and 19 November 2013 in Panama City, Panama, in preparation for the first meeting of the United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP and the 15th Session of the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum, agree to support the following initiatives: the implementation of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration, the Sustainable Development Goals and the 10-Year Framework on Sustainable Consumption and Production, as well as the strengthening of participation of civil society organizations by adopting a policy for their involvement. Consequently,

Regarding the policy for involving the Major Groups and Stakeholders, **we call upon** the States to:

- (i) move forward on the basis of the principle of non-retrogression;
- (ii) include other, currently excluded groups, which could be incorporated based on the concept of 9+;
- (iii) ensure a broadened participation of civil society organizations in UNEA and the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR), as well as in any current or future subsidiary body;
- (iv) amend Rule of Procedure 69 to allow local and national organizations to also have access to accreditation;
- (v) permit the accreditation of organizations that: (a) are not-for-profit institutions; (b) work on sustainable development issues with an emphasis on the environment; (c) have a minimum of two years' experience (except for those focused on children and adolescents); (d) work at the international, regional, national or local levels; and (e) have been legally established (except for those that work on issues relating to indigenous peoples, local communities and children and adolescents);
- (vi) ensure the participation of civil society organizations in drafting agendas of meetings linked to the UNEP policymaking cycle, especially—but not exclusively—Regional Consultation Meetings, meetings of the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum and those of UNEA;
- (vii) ensure equal status and opportunities between representatives of major groups and those of the regions;
- (viii) ensure that representatives of the Major Groups are elected democratically by organizations of those groups, through public invitations and the dissemination of information on candidates;
- (ix) ensure that regional representatives are democratically elected by attendees of Regional Consultation Meetings;
- (x) establish clear accountability mechanisms for representatives of the Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum, whether they represent the Major Groups or the regions, including reports on their participation at each meeting or forum, as well as a report at the end of their mandate.

Regarding the implementation of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration:

We welcome the adoption of the Declaration on the Application of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development as the beginning of an open multilateral process undertaken to adopt an instrument for Latin America and the Caribbean embodied in a regional roadmap.

We appeal to the countries of the region that have not yet joined this process to do so without delay. Similarly, we ask the signatory countries to ensure the participation of all Major Groups and

Stakeholders in the process of negotiating and implementing this instrument, taking into account the Bali Guidelines as they carry out these endeavours.

We encourage UNEP to strengthen coordination and cooperation mechanisms with intergovernmental agencies linked to sustainable development, especially with the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) and the regional economic commissions in general, in particular the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), in order to work in an integrated manner and achieve greater internal consistency, promoting the active participation of civil society representatives in the process.

We urge the States of the region to build and strengthen the regulatory framework and the monitoring and accountability mechanisms, in order to implement and ensure the effective implementation of Principle 10.

Regarding the Sustainable Development Goals:

We invite the States to promote the active participation of the Major Groups and Stakeholders at the different stages of the processes of defining the Sustainable Development Goals, with a view to channelling their visions, proposals and concerns at the local, national, subregional, regional and global levels.

We ask the States to:

- (i) extract the lessons learned and best practices stemming from the design and implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, to facilitate
- (ii) integration and balance between economic development, social equity and environmental sustainability;
- (iii) recognize the relevance of the binding and non-binding instruments, and encourage and reinvigorate local Agenda 21 and the Earth Charter; and
- (iv) respect different worldviews on development as well as those of Indigenous peoples and local communities. All of this in order to formulate the Sustainable Development Goals so as to frame public policy and realign the priorities of international cooperation.

Regarding the 10-Year Framework on Sustainable Consumption and Production:

We urge the States to facilitate the participation of the Major Groups and Stakeholders in formulating, developing and implementing the programmes approved with regard to the 10-Year Framework on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP). Furthermore, we maintain that it is necessary to incorporate a programme to support Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), which are one of the four priorities identified at the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean.

We, the representatives of the Major Groups and Stakeholders of Latin America and the Caribbean, are committed to actively take part in building participatory processes and opportunities that draw together civil society and the States, in order to achieve sustainable development in the region.

Given in Panama City on 19 November 2013.

**NORTH AMERICAN ANNUAL REGIONAL CONSULTATION
MEETING WITH MAJOR GROUPS AND STAKEHOLDERS IN
PREPARATION FOR THE 15TH UNEP GLOBAL MAJOR
GROUPS AND STAKEHOLDERS FORUM (GMGSF-15) AND
FIRST SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT
ASSEMBLY OF UNEP (UNEA-1), 3-4 DECEMBER 2013
(WASHINGTON D.C., USA)**

KEY MESSAGES

In addition to broader concerns regarding a sustainable future, the two main themes for the Major Groups and Stakeholders (MGS) consultation were integrating environmental sustainability into the post-2015 development agenda and improving stakeholder engagement within UNEP.

Key points raised by participants at the Consultation are enumerated below.

These key messages reflect areas of general consensus. However, the various groups present do not necessarily endorse every conclusion.

Integrating Environmental Sustainability into the Post-2015 Agenda

Discussions on this theme revolved around the development of a new sustainability narrative. Urgency is central to the new narrative, stemming from the need to accept the physical limits to the Earth's carrying capacity. Environmental sustainability requires a global response. The new narrative should be relatable to all geographies, cultures and circumstances.

Integrating environmental sustainability into the post-2015 agenda requires an overarching narrative framework into which the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are placed, and which can be used to guide the development of programs for their implementation. In an effort to limit the overall goals to a manageable number, the SDGs should feature a layered approach to the post-2015 development agenda. Environmental sustainability should be woven throughout the goals, with targets, metrics and indicators that are grounded in accepted science.

This framework should include:

- An emphasis on a rights-based approach, with a focus on human rights, but including other forms of rights, such as an intrinsic right to life for other species in their own habitat;
- An emphasis on universal responsibilities, acknowledging that sustainability will need to accommodate development in emerging economies;
- An emphasis on social and cultural values, meaning that while we are aware of economic and institutional dynamics, the post-2015 agenda is not driven by them;
- An emphasis on inclusion;
- An emphasis on well-being, which includes, but goes beyond, material well-being;

Other issues raised included ensuring that environmental sustainability was also embedded in the multilateral trade agreements that are outside the framework of UNEP, the SDGs and the post-2015 agenda.

There should be an SDG on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) with the 10 Year Framework of Programmes (10YFP) on SCP framed as the means for implementation.

Improving Stakeholder Engagement in UNEP

UNEP should seek to broaden its stakeholder engagement beyond the nine Major Groups to increase the diversity of expertise and potentially include additional sectors. UNEP should revisit the rules for accreditation and change the requirements to allow national and regional groups.

There was concern that the eleven Principles of Stakeholder Engagement drafted and approved at the 14th GMGSF were not entirely reflected in the new proposed policy.

The Regional Offices of UNEP should also expand civil society presence and participation, recognizing that civil society organizations have a responsibility to develop their own means to be present and to participate.

A civil society/MGS presence in Nairobi is necessary in order to participate fully in the work of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) on an ongoing basis. While distance technology enables some participation, physical presence is crucial in order to facilitate agenda setting as well as participation in the decisions of the CPR. UNEP should regularly inform and update civil society organizations with issues appearing before the CPR, so that those most affected have sufficient lead-time to make representations on their behalf.

Finally, civil society should be allowed and encouraged to self-organize into issues-based and regional caucuses in order to provide more focused civil society contributions to specific deliberations.
